

The Franklin Press

and

The Highlands Maconian

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AUGUST 2, 1956

'Let Us Reason Together'

Should we North Carolinians amend our state constitution, as proposed in the Pearsall plan? are changes necessary in order to meet the crisis precipitated by the U. S. Supreme Court's segregation decisions? are the proposed changes the right ones for the purpose, and are they otherwise desirable?

Those questions must be answered by the voters of Macon and the state's other 99 counties at an election called for September 8. The changes were approved at a special session of the General Assembly last week, and now it is up to the voters to ratify or refuse to ratify them.

Two specific changes are proposed.

The first would permit the state to make educational grants toward paying the tuition of children in private schools, where they were assigned to racially mixed schools against the wishes of their parents.

The second would permit the people of a school district, by majority vote, to close a school when they considered conditions "intolerable".

Last week's legislative session in Raleigh was surely one of the shortest ones in American history. The legislators assembled on Monday night and adjourned Friday afternoon; they were in session just a little more than four days. This newspaper feels that wasn't sufficient time for careful consideration of so important a problem.

That fact, though, does not necessarily reflect on the plan itself; it has been under study for a year by a special committee. The plan deserves to be considered on its own merits.

But the fact that the legislators acted so swiftly is all the more reason for the issue to be considered carefully by every voter.

Between now and the election, The Press will discuss the Pearsall plan editorially. Not that the people of Macon County need someone to tell them how to vote; they are quite capable of doing their own thinking.

The editorials, instead, will seek to fulfill the first function of a newspaper — to inform the people about what is proposed, so they can vote more intelligently.

Meanwhile, we hope there will be more debate in Macon County than there was in Raleigh. For such debate, the "Letters" column of this newspaper is wide open. We hope there will be many letters on the issue. But because we hope many Macon County citizens will express themselves in letters to the editor, we make one request of correspondents: Please keep your letters within a reasonable length—about 500 words is desirable; 300 or 400 would be even better.

Ain't That Nice!

If a woman keeps an old dress long enough, after a while she finds it back in the height of style again. Many of the household remedies for aches and pains that were laughed at 30 years ago today are recognized by doctors as good medication. And now even the simple language that once was frowned on by the pedants is becoming quite proper English.

There's that word "ain't", for instance. Even that has been given the blessing of an authority on English, reports Miss Beatrice Cobb in her Morganton News-Herald:

I have long thought that "Ain't" should be considered a perfectly good English word. At long last Prof. Thomas Dunn, head of the English Department at Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, and therefore an authority on the

"King's English", has had courage enough to defend the word.

He says: "Am I not" is a very awkward phrase. 'Ain't' would be much better."

He defends his position further by saying that awkward as it is, "am I not" isn't as bad as the contraction which some popular writers seem to think is cute—that is, "aren't I." They know that "aren't I", a contraction of "are I not," is bad grammar.

"Isn't" and "Aren't" are merely telescoping of "is not" and "are not." They are correct English by authority of language arbiters of a century or so ago. "Ain't" does precisely the same thing to "am I not"; it merely eliminates "m" and "o." "Why, then," Prof. Dunn asks, "shouldn't 'ain't' be as good a substitute for 'am I not?'"

Now ain't that nice! We've long felt there was a certain dignity and strength about "ain't"; now we can use it without that guilty feeling—without the embarrassment of quickly correcting ourselves, just to make sure people realize we know better.

But, as always, there's "a fly in the ointment"; two, in fact. First off, we wonder just how Prof. Dunn would justify "hain't", which probably is older than "ain't". For surely even the most cockney Englishman never would have put an "h" in front of "am"; never would have said "ham I not?"

And we regret to have the Iowa English professor cast "aren't I" into outer darkness. Matter of fact, it has been our impression that it has long been in use, especially in England, by many of the very people who speak the purest English.

Just between us, Miss Cobb, oughtn't we and other newspaper editors to defend "aren't I"? For if it is ruled out as bad grammar, what is likely to happen to our newspaper "editorial we". You know: One person writes an editorial, but always says "we"; "we believe", "we think", etc., never "I". It happens on the tiniest papers; even if one person makes up the entire staff, is editor, typesetter, printer, and general flunky, he always says "we". Could be, come to think of it, "aren't I" stems from the "editorial we".

Of course, though, whatever our doubts about his verdicts, we wouldn't think of saying to such an authority as Professor Dunn: "It hain't so!"

Others' Opinions

(Opinions expressed in this space are not necessarily those of The Press. Editorials selected for reprinting here, in fact, are chosen with a view to presenting a variety of viewpoints. They are, that is, just what the caption says—OTHERS' Opinions.)

How Much Taxes Do We Pay?

(Bulletin Free Press, of Colo.)

The best way to judge the scope of the tax burden is by how much of your working time goes to pay for it. In 1929, one day's labor out of ten went to support the government. Now the average is one day in four.

Letters

The Mess We're In

Editor, The Press:

It seems as though our officials in Washington can't give any federal aid to schools. But they can appropriate billions to keep a standing army all over the world, and for more money to buy more airplanes. They appropriate millions for foreign aid; then those nations shoot it back at us. I think that is the most uncalled for thing yet.

And this farm mess! We have the deed for our farm, pay the taxes. But we don't have any control over it. They tell us what to plant and how much, and what not to plant. They

THE REAL DANGER

Raleigh Hearing Reveals Depth Of Feeling Against Integration

William D. Snider in Greensboro Daily News

(EDITOR'S NOTE: In the description below of legislative proceedings in Raleigh Wednesday of last week, Mr. Snider describes what he says is the most serious threat to the public schools.)

RALEIGH—As the curtain fell late Wednesday afternoon, (July 25) on the Pearsall Plan public hearings in this Capital City's Memorial Auditorium, the real nature of the threat to the public schools flashed through the hot, humid atmosphere like July lightning.

It erupted in a perspiring legislative audience's hard-to-suppress Democratic applause for Republican John Wilkinson's down-home castigation of his own fellow G.O.P. "integrationists" (the only applause of the day in a hearing sternly gavelled against demonstrations). It peeped through the mannerly, exquisitely disciplined Pearsall rebuttal of Raleigh's William T. Joyner, aimed occasionally at the Blue Devil from Duke, Dr. Douglas Maggs, (who had declared the plan unconstitutional), but most forcefully and persuasively at the more extreme segregation proposal of the Satterfield-Lake coalition of the right—a cloud no larger than a man's fist on the horizon, but growing.

It re-echoed in the startling intelligence relayed to the Governor's ear around breakfast time

that the Lake-Satterfield forces had caucused in some air-conditioned Sir Walter rendezvous, rallying forces for a "massive resistance" stand. Its aim: To unravel with crippling amendments the Pearsall Committee's carefully spun design to save the schools. And that, in turn, brought on a Governor's emergency press conference in which the white-manned captain of the Pearsall forces rapped the Lake plan, declaring: "When you study the situation a full year you have to give consideration to a lot of ideas. The Lake idea was considered . . . a hundred times."

Whence came the threat to the public schools? Any casual observer of these shifting tides of an "extraordinary special session" needed no further evidence: It came from the deeply-felt mores of the serious, mostly shirt-sleeved legislators assembled, unsegregated, in Raleigh's Memorial Auditorium.

Only one of a long procession of integrationists (comprising ministers, educators and PTA idealists) stirred a spark of retaliation or rebuttal. He was the immaculate Dr. Maggs, high priest of Duke University's law school, and college-day instructor of a handful of legislators comprising his audience.

Maggs struck fire. His sweeping denunciation of the Pearsall Plan

gave surplus to foreign people; why not give it to the poor people in the U. S.?

Five men rented 100 surplus army buildings from the government for \$1,000 a month at Camp Crowder, Mo. Then they rented the space back to the government for \$19,000 a month to store spoiling surplus grain in (April '56 Digest).

The people are taxed to death — income tax, real estate tax, personal tax, luxury tax, sales tax, blind tax, and even dog tax. As long as the people stand for all that kind of business and elect such people in office, I suppose we will have to put up with it.

The government is in debt so much now we won't get out in the next 300 years. Still they don't seem to try to balance the budget. I don't know what else they can tax, but I know they could cut expenses. (Tax, tax; give me, and we will give it to foreign countries, and blow it in on other unnecessary things.) That is just what it amounts to. We didn't used to be in debt. But, oh boy! the mess they have got it in now is awful.

WILLIAM S. JOHNSON

Concrete, Wash.
(Formerly of Macon County.)

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

Did you ever feel like you were walking on air? If not, I can tell you how it feels. I know, for that's just what I'm doing these days.

I'm walking on air because I'm not walking at all; I'm ridin' — and under a steering wheel!

Well, what's so wonderful about that? For most people, nothing. But for me, it's an epochal event. Because it's the first time I've driven a car in fifteen years.

The first five of those fifteen, the Weimar Jones family couldn't pay for an automobile; then came a series of eye operations, and I found myself so near-sighted I took it for granted I couldn't get a driver's license. I took it so much for granted, I never even tried.

In this day of two cars in every chicken coop, not to be able to drive is more than just a nuisance; it's embarrassing. You try to make it matter-of-fact when you say "I don't drive, you know"; try to make it sound like it was the most natural thing in the world not to be able to drive. But when you say it, there's always a question mark on the face of the person addressed. Even if he's too polite to put it in words, the question mark says all too plainly: "Well, why don't you learn". For ten long years I had to explain, "I don't drive".

Then, last spring, came a little flicker of the ticker. "You mustn't climb any more hills", was the doctor said; "well, not for a while, any way."

Now to tell a man who doesn't drive an automobile that he mustn't climb hills—to tell a man that, in Franklin, is to immobilize him. And a newspaperman, immobilized, is only a little less useful than a ton of coal at the equator.

I did the best I could. Mrs. Jones chaffered to and from the office as though she had nothing else to do. No member of the Press staff could ever go anywhere without having me tag along. And when a potential customer came into the office, I wasn't half as interested in whether he was going to buy some advertising or order some printing or sub-

scribe for the paper or give us a news story as I was in whether he was a possible bet for a ride uptown!

At last, I decided it was time for necessity to become the mother of effort. So I applied for a driver's license.

I got a learner's permit and practiced—though it took something like a bribe to get anybody into the car when I was under the wheel—and I memorized the Driver's Manual. That, incidentally, was a little like going back to college and taking a course in physics: "When a car going 50 miles per hour strikes a brick wall, the impact is the same as if the car had fallen off the top of a building how many stories high?" Yes, sir, there's a lot in that manual I couldn't see any reason for a man to know in order to drive an automobile; but I'll say this for it: It gets across to prospective drivers something that badly needs being put across — the terrible danger of speed.

At last came the day for the road test. I tried to be casual about it. I reminded myself I had nothing to lose; conditions couldn't be worse. I reassured myself that I could do it. But was I nervous! It was a cool day; yet when I finished, I was as wet with sweat as if I'd been hoeing corn, and was physically and nervously exhausted. I made mistakes I had never made in practice. Mr. Hooper (Robert Hooper, the local examiner), however, was both patient and encouraging, and I thought I had done all right.

Then came the bad news: "Sorry, Mr. Jones, but I can't pass on you; I'll have to let my supervisor test you." More mental anguish ahead!

Well, to make a too-long story no longer, Mr. Moore (W. W. Moore, of Canton, examining supervisor for this district) also was patient and encouraging. And I made it!

And no just-licensed 16-year old was ever prouder. Fact is, I think I'll have my license photostated, and frame the photostat to hang over my desk — just to remind me that you never know what you can do till you try!

VIEW

By

BOB SLOAN



There are inherent dangers in the Pearsall plan for the school system which many people are not stopping to consider, with thought, before they adopt any constitutional amendments which might have serious effects on our public school system. I would like to mention some of them.

1. Before we place in the hands of the people in each district the right to close their public schools by a simple majority vote shouldn't we stop and consider? Under this system it will be a not too difficult task for some unscrupulous person or persons to inflame the people with an emotional issue entirely unrelated to the subject of segregation, and gain control of the school system for personal benefit. As protection against a small group gaining control of the schools for monetary or political gain would it not be better to at least require a two-thirds majority vote of the registered voters on the elimination of the schools?

2. Before anyone votes to eliminate the public schools, remember that the tuition expense grant plan is deceiving. Cost on private school operation show that in all probability state grants will not meet the cost. This will likely mean a lowering of the educational standards and in all likelihood the elimination of educational opportunities for the children of many people in the lower income bracket.

3. The career of a school teacher in North Carolina will be less inviting, because the pay may be lower and certainly there will be less security. Even with the statue as it is now written on the books, a thoughtful person will think twice before starting out on making teaching a career in our public schools. Long years of seniority and retirement benefits may be wiped out overnight.

North Carolina can solve its segregation-integration problem without so endangering its public school system.

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Material is being placed on the ground near the Baptist Church to erect a new building for the Macon High School.

E. D. Franks is building a two-story dwelling on South Street, with stone basement below. The building will contain 10 rooms.

Mr. J. C. Wright and family vacated the house they recently sold to A. P. Munday, yesterday, and went to board with Mrs. Leach on West Main Street. Mrs. Munday moved in and took possession of the premises yesterday.

25 YEARS AGO

The annual Macon County Flower Show will be held Saturday in the building formerly occupied by Angel's Drug Store.

Miss Marian Leveritch, of New Orleans, La., is the house guest of Miss Jane Cary George, at the summer home of her parents, Chestnut Lodge.—Highlands item.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Moore, of Sylva, are visiting Mrs. Moore's parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Matlock.

10 YEARS AGO

Miss Peggy Thompson, of Charlotte, spent the week-end here with her mother, Mrs. H. P. P. Thompson, and family. — Highlands item.

Mr. and Mrs. James E. Meyers, of Franklin, Route 3, will mark their Golden Wedding anniversary Friday. They will hold open house at their home Sunday afternoon from 2 to 6 o'clock.

T/Sgt. C. R. Cabe, who has been stationed in Japan for several months, has received his discharge from the service and is now at his home on Franklin, Route 2.